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ABSTRACT

This booklet is one of a series on world issues that investigates East-West relations in Europe by addressing important questions and dilemmas. These include: (1) What are the goals of the European countries in their relations with one another? (2) How do they view the division of Europe, its origins and its consequences? (3) To what extent are the goals of the East and West European states in conflict with the interests of their superpower allies? Chapter 1 describes how and why Europe is divided. Topics emphasized include the structure of a divided Europe, the economic division, and the social and cultural division of Europe. Chapter 2 analyzes the notion of a divided Germany living at the heart of a divided Europe. Topics within the chapter include the evolution of the German question, the persistence of West Germany's Eastern polices, and various contemporary perspectives on the German question. Chapter 3 describes strategies for overcoming the division of Europe. These include a discussion of Europe between the superpowers, a modified European Security System, and moving toward change through multilateral and bilateral links. Chapter 4 investigates future issues and implications. The "Talking It Over" section offers questions for students and discussion groups. The report includes maps, graphs, and a reading list. (RSL)

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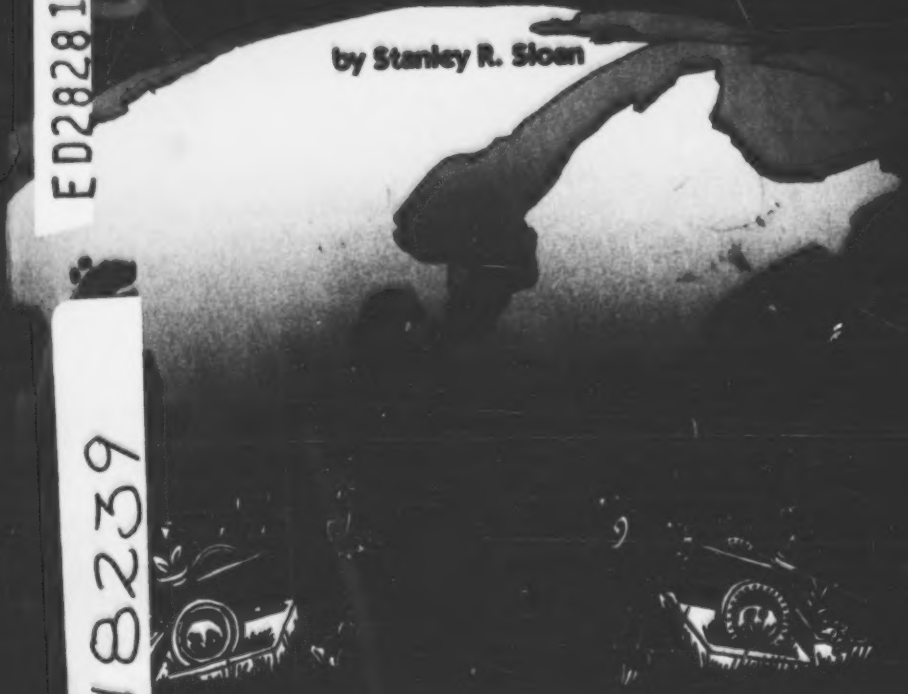
by Stanley R. Sloan



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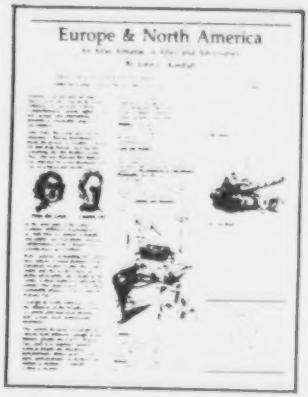

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The author, John C. Kimball, a retired U.S. Foreign Service Officer, was Senior Editor and Chief of Publications for the Department of State, and Head of Media Operations on the International Staff of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

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Introduction

When the United States and the Soviet Union were barely on speaking terms in the late 1970s and early 1980s, some new and potentially important dynamics emerged in relations between the allies of the two superpowers in Eastern and Western Europe. While the United States proclaimed the death of *détente*, the policy of relaxed relations with the Soviet Union, its European allies, particularly the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), asserted the continuing importance of closer relations with their neighbors to the East. Notwithstanding the Soviet Union's repeated threats that the deployment of new American intermediate-range missiles in Europe would further divide the Continent, some East European countries continued their search for expanded trade, political, cultural and professional contacts with their West European neighbors. (As used throughout this text, the term East European does not include the Soviet Union.) As a central ingredient of this East-West European dynamic, the two German states sought further opportunities to expand and normalize their relations, in spite of the missile controversy and the mixed feelings of their respective allies about the enterprise.

These developments raised a number of important questions.

What are the goals of the European countries in their relations with one another? How do they view the division of Europe, its origins and its consequences?

To what extent are the goals of the East and West European states in conflict with the interests of their superpower allies? The Soviet Union limits the freedom of East European regimes to expand their openings to the West. The West European countries are not similarly limited, but they must nonetheless avoid alienating the United States—the ultimate guarantor of their security.

Both East and West European countries apparently have more room for maneuver with their superpower allies than they did when the two alliances were formed. But can the European countries lead the way to a new era of détente, or must they depend still on the tolerance and/or initiative of their alliance leader for any major changes in East-West relations?

The United States and the Soviet Union in mid-1986 appeared prepared to resume a high-level dialogue on a broad agenda of political, economic, and strategic issues. The European countries undoubtedly will want to benefit from the renewed dialogue and to help assure its continuation. Answers to the questions raised above may tell us something about the role the European countries will play in this process, and the influence they will attempt to exert on their superpower allies in a new era of negotiations.

1

How and Why Is Europe Divided?

The "idea of Europe" is just that—an idea. The fractious Continent has for centuries successfully resisted the unifying efforts of kings, empires, dictators, concerts, alliances, statesmen and Europeanists alike. And yet the idea of Europe will not die.

Following World War II, the European idea began to take new root in Western Europe. Since then, the West European countries have managed to break down many economic, political, cultural and linguistic barriers which previously divided them. And, with the help and participation of the United States, they have preserved peace among themselves for the longest period in the history of the European nation-state system. Western Europe is not "united," but the unifying process has provided a framework for solving common problems and developing common positions on economic and, increasingly, foreign policy issues among a growing number of European states.

This progress has not been matched by success in overcoming the contemporary division of Europe into Eastern and Western halves, a division that is particularly difficult for Europeans to accept. As historian Gordon A. Craig has observed, when the Iron Curtain descended between Eastern and Western Europe soon

after the war, it "was not merely of political and economic significance. It represented a barrier to the free exchange of ideas, to mutual stimulation, and to scholarly and scientific collaboration that was virtually insurmountable." According to Craig, "Not since the religious wars of the 16th century had two parts of Europe been so effectively sealed off from each other. . . ."

Neither East nor West Europeans accept the division of Europe as a desirable or permanent condition. But the East-West structure of relations in Europe has for nearly four decades proven highly resistant to dramatic change.

The Structure of a Divided Europe

In February 1945, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet leader Josef Stalin reached general agreement at Yalta on how the victorious anti-Nazi allies would structure postwar relations in Europe. Some observers see this accord as a deplorable blunder in U.S. policy, sanctioning Soviet control over the eastern half of Germany and the other states of Eastern Europe and encouraging the U.S.S.R.'s expansionist tendencies. (At the time, none of the defenders of the agreements reached at Yalta believed that the accord sanctioned Soviet domination of Eastern Europe.) Other observers have interpreted the accord less critically as an approximate reflection of political and power realities of the time; to some of these observers, the accord recognized the Soviet Union's understandable desire to erect a defensive shield against any future resurgence of German power. To others, it simply acknowledged the control that the Soviet army had established as it drove German forces back to the West.

Some commentators, including most official Soviet observers, portray Yalta as embodying a formula for stable and peaceful relations among European countries in the postwar era, heralding an end to the wars which twice in this century had devastated the Continent. Yet others have seen Yalta as the cornerstone for U.S. and Soviet condominium over the Western and Eastern halves of Europe.

From a European perspective, the shape of postwar Europe

was decided predominantly by non-Europeans. The United States and the Soviet Union exercised the leading influence. The Soviet Union straddled the Eurasian continent, but was not truly a "European" nation. The United States was in many ways a child of Europe, but was separated by an ocean and by its own set of priorities and interests. Britain had been a traditional participant in European affairs, but had maintained a measured distance from the "continentals." French leader Charles de Gaulle particularly resented the fact that crucial decisions about Europe's future had been taken out of European hands.

In any case, the outcome of the war guaranteed that the United States and the Soviet Union could play a decisive role in shaping postwar Europe if they chose to do so, as they did. And the structure of a divided Europe which emerged in the late 1940s and early 1950s reflected the ideological, power and economic conflicts in the relationship between the two superpowers.

The Politico-Military Division of Europe

The most obvious and important consequence of Europe's division was the formation of opposing politico-military alliances. Faced by what appeared in the West to be a Soviet Union anxious to dominate as much of the Continent as possible, the United States led the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The North Atlantic Treaty was signed on April 4, 1949, by Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and the United States. Greece and Turkey acceded to the treaty in 1952, West Germany in 1955, and Spain in 1982. NATO became the central coordinating mechanism for Western defense efforts in Europe. The allies established a common military command to which, in time of crisis, all NATO-committed forces would be assigned. The NATO allies also developed an elaborate system of consultation and coordination to encourage parallel development of national force-planning in peacetime. The first Supreme Allied Commander of NATO forces was General Dwight D. Eisenhower; a U.S. general has held the position ever since, symbolizing the

central role of the United States in the alliance. (France left the integrated command structure in 1966, expressing its intent to follow a security policy independent of U.S. leadership. Greece has in recent years established a semiautonomous position in the alliance, and NATO's newest member, Spain, has not integrated its forces into the NATO command structure.)

NATO has served as far more than a mechanism for coordinating Western defense efforts. The NATO allies have also attempted to use political consultations in the alliance, under the auspices of the North Atlantic Council, to develop common positions on a wide range of East-West issues. This role for the alliance was given a special priority in 1967 when the allies adopted the so-called Harmel Report which asserted that the alliance had "two main functions." The first function, and the one with which the alliance had become most closely identified, was "to maintain adequate military strength and political solidarity to deter aggression and other forms of pressure and to defend the territory of member countries if aggression should occur." The second, and newly assigned function of the alliance, was "to pursue the search for progress towards a more stable [East-West] relationship in which the underlying political issues can be solved."

The alliance operates by consensus: no ally can be forced by NATO procedures to adopt a position or a decision that it finds unacceptable. On the other hand, NATO is not really an alliance among equals. The United States is the dominant military and political force in the alliance, as a consequence of its overwhelming power and the fact that the European allies depend to a substantial degree on the threat of the United States to use nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union in the case of Soviet aggression against Europe. This guarantee, extending the deterrent effect of U.S. strategic nuclear forces to form an umbrella over Europe, has served as NATO's ultimate source of security and also as the leading source of U.S. preeminence in the alliance.

The Soviet Union used its predominant military position in Eastern Europe following the war to impose its political, military and economic preferences on the eastern half of Germany and

most of the nations of Eastern Europe. In the years following the war, regimes dominated by Communist parties were established in Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia.

After West Germany joined NATO in 1955, the Soviet Union concluded the Warsaw Pact with the governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Rumania. While other East European Communist regimes were imposed under the Soviet gun, Yugoslavia's, led by Marshall Josip Broz Tito, had strong domestic roots. Yugoslavia's more independent position, combined with its greater geographic distance from Soviet power, allowed it to escape Soviet domination, avoid Warsaw Pact membership and eventually assert a position of nonalignment between East and West. Albania left the pact in 1968, aligning itself more closely with Communist China. Moscow tolerated the defection because Albania is of little strategic significance to the Soviet Union, and in any case had no intention of joining the West or abandoning its socialist orientation. Because neither Yugoslavia nor Albania share a border with the Soviet Union, enforcing Soviet control of these countries presumably appeared more costly to Moscow than it was worth.

Even though the Warsaw Pact was established in theory as a response to NATO in the West, its principal function has been to keep order, both militarily and politically, within the Eastern ranks. The commander of Warsaw Pact forces has always been a Soviet general, and political direction for the pact has come directly from the Soviet capital. When the Soviet Union intervened militarily to put an end to the flowering of political, cultural and economic diversity in Czechoslovakia in 1968, Moscow called on other Warsaw Pact countries to join the Soviet Union in providing both troops and political support for the effort. Furthermore, Soviet leader Leonid I. Brezhnev, in what became known as the Brezhnev Doctrine, boldly asserted the right of the Soviet Union to intervene militarily to maintain bloc unity and the integrity of the socialist community.

There are signs that the relationship between Moscow and its Warsaw Pact allies is growing more complex. The Brezhnev

Doctrine still hangs over the heads of the East Europeans, but military intervention is by no means Moscow's preferred option for maintaining bloc unity. The bloc, of course, has never been as "unified" as Moscow would have liked. For many years, Rumania has sought to express its own national independence by diverging from the Soviet foreign policy line from time to time and even expressing direct criticism of Soviet policies. Rumania's domestic Communist orthodoxy, however, is generally regarded as giving the regime some flexibility in its relations with Moscow. In recent years, other Warsaw Pact members have also sought somewhat greater room for maneuver in their relationship with Moscow. On occasion, Hungary, Bulgaria and East Germany have pushed the limits on behalf of their own national perspective, and have found the limits less confining than was the case 20 years ago. But developments in Poland demonstrated that there still are severe limits on what the Soviet Union will tolerate, just as they demonstrated Moscow's inability to suppress more permanently the aspirations of the Poles and other East Europeans for greater national autonomy.

The Economic Division of Europe

The postwar era divided the European continent economically as well as politically and militarily. Initial American efforts sought to foster economic recovery for all of Europe, East and West. In 1947, the United States invited the Soviet Union and the East European states to participate in its Marshall Plan aid program. Both Czechoslovakia and Poland indicated their interest and sent representatives to a planning meeting. But Stalin, demonstrating emerging Soviet control, vetoed Eastern participation in the program. The Soviet leader established the Cominform—Communist Information Bureau—among European Communist parties as a political counter to the Marshall Plan, which he charged was "an instrument of American imperialism."

As a condition for providing Marshall Plan aid, the United States asked that the Europeans develop a mechanism to ensure effective use of the assistance and to foster economic cooperation among the recipients. (Stalin undoubtedly viewed such coopera-

tion as intended to undermine Soviet control of East European governments.) In 1948, 16 West European foreign ministers and the commanders in chief of the Western Zones of Occupation in Germany signed the Convention for European Cooperation, establishing the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) in response to the American request.

The process of European economic cooperation which began with the Marshall Plan aid program stimulated support in a number of West European countries for even more-extensive economic integration. This led in 1951 to the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community among Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany—the "Six." These countries went on in 1957 to form the European Atomic Energy Community and the European Economic Community (EEC), or Common Market. (The three communities are popularly referred to as the Community or EC.) The Community became the central focus for the development of economic relations within Western Europe. In the course of its 30-year history, the Community has doubled in membership, adding Britain, Denmark and Ireland in 1973, Greece in 1981, Spain and Portugal in 1986. The Community members have eliminated most obstacles to trade among them, have adopted a wide range of common policies, and, on trade and a growing number of other issues, deal with the outside world from common positions. The Community has fallen far short of the most ambitious economic and political goals set for it in the early days, but it still represents one of the most significant accomplishments of the Western countries in the postwar period.

In addition, the European countries, along with the United States, Japan, and other Western nations, have established a diverse set of organizations and procedures to govern their trade, financial and economic relations. These organizations include the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which succeeded the OEEC, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the annual summit meetings among the leaders of the major Western industrialized nations

and Japan. The Western countries also established the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Control (COCOM) to standardize restrictions on the export to Communist countries of technology which might be used for military purposes.

In the East, the Soviet Union gave priority to its own recovery, and was neither inclined nor particularly able to foster the reconstruction of the East European states. In fact, while the Marshall Plan transferred over $13 billion in resources from the United States to Western Europe, the Soviet Union squeezed approximately the same amount from Eastern Europe to help support Soviet reconstruction. In the 1950s, however, Moscow established its own economic community, known as the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA, or Comecon). The European members are Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Rumania, in addition to the Soviet Union. Yugoslavia is loosely associated with Comecon and the EC, which facilitates its trade with both East and West European countries. (Comecon now also includes three non-European members: Cuba, Mongolia and Vietnam.)

Many of the theoretical goals of Comecon replicated those of the EEC in the West. In reality, however, Comecon served primarily as an economic counterpart to the Warsaw Pact, providing the Soviet Union with an instrument which it could use to maintain bloc unity in trade and economic matters and, in particular, to ensure that economic priorities in the other centrally planned and controlled economies took Soviet requirements into account.

The divergent East-West organizational patterns reflect the deep differences between the economic systems in the East and those in the West. In the Western system, economic and trade relations were allowed to respond to market forces—supply and demand, the profit motive, etc.—tempered by government intervention. Communist ideology, of course, saw this capitalistic system as a source of oppression of the working class and called for the regime to control market forces in the interest of the proletariat. For political and economic reasons, therefore, the Soviet Union attempted to seal off its own economy and those of

its East European allies from Western market forces. This requirement disrupted traditional trade patterns between East and West European countries, and raised myriad technical obstacles to developing new trade relations between the members of opposing economic systems.

During the East-West détente of the early 1970s, East-West trade flourished, as Eastern countries increased their imports of Western goods underwritten by substantial loans from Western sources. The East European countries had found that they could not survive in isolation from the international economy, particularly because the Soviet Union was not able to meet all their needs. They sought markets in the West for their products, so that they could in turn import Western goods, and they increasingly needed access to Western technology to modernize their economies. Western governments saw both economic and political benefits in this expansion of trade. New markets for West European products were, of course, welcome. Many West Europeans, particularly the West German political leadership, viewed expanded trade with their neighbors to the East first and foremost as a way to begin overcoming the division of Germany and the Continent and to loosen Soviet control over Eastern Europe. And some people hoped the Soviet Union would moderate its own policies in order to facilitate its access to Western capital and technology.

The optimism of the 1970s about the potential economic and political benefits of East-West trade was tempered considerably by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 and the declaration of martial law in Poland in December 1981. Perhaps even more importantly, the global economic recession of the early 1980s reduced Western demand for East European products, which, in turn, made it difficult for East European countries to manage the debts they had accumulated through Western loans at a time when political and economic prospects appeared more rosy.

In spite of the reduced expectations for East-West trade in Eastern and Western Europe, the attraction of Western markets and the dynamism of market forces have produced some changes

in Eastern Europe and mitigated Europe's economic division. The desire for access to Western markets and capital has led a number of East European nations to join some of the Western economic institutions—Yugoslavia, Hungary, Rumania and now Poland belong to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Many East European countries have acceded to the GATT, and Yugoslavia even has a special status with the OECD. Although all Comecon members remain command rather than market economies, Hungary in particular has improved its economic fortunes by openly tolerating at least a degree of competition, decentralized planning and free-market activity within the context of an otherwise planned economy. These changes have not advanced far enough to overcome the economic division of Europe, but they may point the way toward closer cooperation in the future.

The Social and Cultural Division of Europe

Finally, the postwar division of Europe split the Continent in human and cultural terms. The Iron Curtain for many years was just that: a nearly impenetrable barrier separating East from West, dividing families, breaking down normal communications, impeding the flow of ideas, blocking scientific exchanges and separating Eastern and Western cultural communities.

In many respects, it is this human dimension of Europe's division which arouses the strongest emotions and stimulates efforts to overcome the division. This is particularly the case with regard to Germany, where the Iron Curtain descended on the middle of a nation, dividing people, families and an entire culture. But it also applies to the rest of the Continent, albeit on a less emotional plane.

From the Soviet perspective, the closing of the Eastern bloc's borders to the free flow of people and information was a political and economic necessity in the early postwar years. The Soviet Union was in the process of imposing a revolutionary change of government, economy and society on previously independent nations. There was nothing subtle about the process. There was no room for dissent, as individual and mass protestors discovered

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throughout the bloc. The Berlin Wall, erected in 1961, remains a stark reminder of the physical separation that the East-bloc regimes required to preserve control over their populations. Prior to the construction of the wall, East Germany was losing its skilled and professional labor force at a dramatic rate, undermining the East German economy.

The West European countries have set a high priority on reducing Eastern Europe's social isolation from the West. The Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), signed in Helsinki, Finland, in 1975 by the United States, Canada and 33 East and West European governments, included nonbinding commitments to improve a wide range of contacts between East and West. Although the Soviet Union and its East European allies for the most part are still not willing to tolerate anywhere near the same degree of freedom in the movement of individuals and the flow of information that is taken for granted among Western countries, there has been progress. The relentless march of communications technology and the attractiveness of many aspects of Western culture have made

it increasingly difficult for the East-bloc countries to deny their citizens access to Western culture and information. The East German government, in particular, has accepted the fact that West German television is watched regularly by most of its citizens. Hungary and Poland, with strong historical links to the West, are the most liberal among Warsaw Pact countries in allowing their citizens to travel to the West. The degree of political, social and economic normalization of relations between East and West European countries is most advanced between Hungary and neutral Austria. Hungary has also extended a reciprocal visa policy to neutrals Sweden and Finland. Although Poland is more open than most East-bloc states, hundreds of Poles still board pleasure cruises to West German ports to seek asylum in the West.

In spite of the positive changes, the division of Europe still separates families, restricts normal contacts between Eastern and Western citizens, and inhibits East-West cultural and intellectual interaction.

Why Is Europe Divided?

It is more than an academic exercise to ask why Europe is divided. The many ways in which this question can be answered influence the behavior of policymakers and therefore of governments. In the East and in the West, varying approaches to this issue are shaped by different ideological perspectives and historical experiences. There is clearly no single objective answer to the question—this is the stuff of which politics is made.

The most apparent explanation for the division of Europe is the Soviet Union's postwar domination of Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union took advantage of its dominant military position in Central Europe after the war to install Communist regimes throughout Eastern Europe. Moscow demanded the loyalty of those regimes, including the military support of their armed forces—and more. As West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher has written, the Soviet Union defined its security interest to require "not only the loyalty of the Warsaw Pact member countries, but also that they accept the rigid

Soviet-style Communist system." Furthermore, the closing of borders between East and West, while compatible even with pre-Bolshevik Russian tradition, was completely alien to the East European historical experience. The political, military, social and economic conformity with Soviet wishes imposed a regional system on East European countries that was incompatible with the system of relations established among the West European democracies.

Although most Western observers would judge the Soviet Union guilty of imposing the division of Europe, some would add that Moscow is not solely responsible for its military dimension. These observers would argue that the division has become caught up in the power and ideological competition between the Soviet Union and the United States, and that neither superpower is willing to disengage politically or militarily. Both, therefore, are responsible for the continued division of the Continent into opposing military blocs.

This perspective influences to some degree calculations on the political left in Western Europe; it also finds expression in official East European views. Soviet behavior is seen, from this point of view, as motivated in large part by justifiably defensive reactions to historical experiences, vulnerability to attack from the West, and by concern that the United States seeks to challenge the Soviet Union's defensive shield in Eastern Europe.

One need not accept this perspective in its entirety to believe that U.S.-Soviet conflict plays a role in Europe's continued division. Many American and European analysts, including some not particularly known for leftist leanings, acknowledge that U.S.-Soviet military and ideological competition has become part and parcel of Europe's division, even if they do not accept it as the principal cause of the division.

Not all Europeans seek to place the entire blame for Europe's division on non-European sources. Some, for example, have argued that the European nation-states themselves failed to develop and sustain a system that effectively regulated relations among them. From this broader historical perspective, the two world wars of this century reflect the failure of the European

system to maintain peace and stability. Competition among the nation-states of Europe is seen as the main factor leading to the onset of World War I and to the conditions that stimulated Adolf Hitler's rise to power in Germany and his emergence as a threat to all of Europe. Germany was prevented from "unifying" Europe only by a coalition that included the United States and the Soviet Union that then remained involved in European affairs after the defeat of Germany. As a consequence, according to the West German scholar Eberhard Schulz, "the Europeans have lost the determining influence over their fate, finding themselves divided in two in the role of wards of their respective protective and hegemonial powers."

Finally, the German problem is another important explanation offered for Europe's division. According to this view, from historical and geopolitical perspectives, a strong Germany in the center of Europe proved to be a destabilizing force, a threat to the interests of other European countries and the Soviet Union. It is little wonder that after the war the Soviet Union sought first to control and then to divide and weaken this once-powerful source of so much national suffering for the Russians. It is no surprise that France, Poland and other neighbors of Germany who paid so dearly in human life and national well-being shared the desire to guarantee that the German problem was satisfactorily handled in the postwar period. For most of them, the division of Germany after the war was no great tragedy, even if they sympathized with those Germans who fell under Communist rule.

Even those observers who place primary blame for Europe's division on the Soviet Union generally acknowledge that the Soviets had good reason to seek a postwar structure in Europe that would give them some control over the German problem. Most observers agree that overcoming the division of Europe would require settling, in some fashion, the German question. How to do this has been one of the most contentious and difficult issues between the Eastern and Western alliances, as well as within the Western alliance itself, throughout the postwar era.

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Divided Germany: The Heart of a Divided Europe

Historians like to remind policy analysts that there has been a German question since the nation-state became the central organizing unit for the European continent more than two centuries ago. Until the many Germanic states were unified under Prussian leadership with the formation of the German Empire in 1871, the German question was how Europe could find peace when feuding among German states continuously invited outside powers to compete for influence, power and economic gain. But unified Germany, nourished by growing German nationalism, rapidly expanded its military capabilities and contributed to the onset of World War I. After the war, the victorious powers asked a new German question: How could Germany be constrained so that it could not seek European hegemony from its Central European base? The answers provided to this question by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 unfortunately helped create a backlash in Germany that led to the rise of a new and even greater threat.

Following World War II, the German question became caught up in the ideological and power confrontation between East and West. But even if the United States and the Soviet Union should

magically achieve a substantial détente in their relations tomorrow, there is no guarantee that the "German question" would be settled.

Germany's Division

Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin's conference at Yalta is generally regarded as crucial not only for the organization of postwar Europe but for the future of postwar Germany. Churchill and Roosevelt, at Stalin's urging, agreed at Yalta to study the "dismemberment" of Germany "as they deem requisite for future peace and security." The three did not work out how this division would be accomplished, although they did agree to divide Germany temporarily into Soviet, American, British and French zones of occupation. This ultimately provided the basis for the division of Germany into eastern and western halves.

When the deepening cold war in the late 1940s led to the de facto partition of Germany, the German question became whether and how Germany would be reunited. The United States supported the claim of the FRG for reunification and free all-German elections. The Soviet Union, while holding out the prospect of reunification, did so under conditions clearly intended to lead to a united Germany's neutralization and, presumably, absorption into the Soviet sphere of influence.

Throughout the postwar era, the views of the United States and the Soviet Union on the German question have changed very little. The Soviet Union has never been willing to contemplate reunification under conditions which would remove East Germany from the Soviet bloc. The United States, for its part, has never judged that its interests would be served by reunification under terms that would neutralize West Germany.

In spite of this continuity, there have been significant changes in the relationship between East and West Germany, shifts in attitudes within the two German states, and adjustments in the relationship of each to their respective superpower patrons. These changes are of consequence for East-West relations in Europe more generally as well as for inter-German ties.

Following their victory over Nazi Germany, the allies formed

U.S. Department of State

the Allied Control Council, as had been agreed at the Yalta Conference, to govern the defeated country until they could decide on a postwar system of government for Germany. They invited France to join the council, and the quadripartite authority divided Germany into four separate occupation zones. The quadripartite formula was replicated in the former capital, Berlin, which was deep inside the Soviet zone.

Almost immediately, the work of the council was hindered by the divergent goals and concepts of how a postwar Germany should be governed. The council finally was abandoned in 1948, a victim of the deepening cold war.

The drift toward cold war was accelerated when the Soviet Union in 1948 blocked Western road and rail access to Berlin, hoping, perhaps, to force the Western powers from the city or, at a minimum, to emphasize the tenuous nature of the Western position there. After an American and British airlift demonstrated the West's intent to sustain West Berlin, the blockade was finally lifted. West Berlin became a lasting symbol of freedom for the West, but, because of its exposed position, it remained a vulnerable chink in the West's political armor.

As the wartime alliance crumbled and the Soviet Union consolidated its control over a satellite regime in eastern Germany, the Western powers combined their respective zones of occupation, in part to facilitate economic reconstruction. In so doing, the Western allies created the potential for a western Germany three times the size of its eastern counterpart. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union had stripped its zone of much of its industrial plant, shipping it back to the Soviet Union to foster Soviet recovery from the war.

The Western allies also opened the way for a resumption of political activity in western Germany, beginning at the *Land* (state) level in 1946. By 1949 some 14 parties had emerged. The strongest of the 14 were the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), a center-right grouping with a credo resting on Christian principles, and the Social Democratic party (SPD), with roots in the Socialist party of the same name in the Weimar Republic prior to the rise of Hitler.

After the merger of the U.S., British and French zones, the occupation authorities directed the leaders of the *Länder* (states) to draft a constitution. The German politicians agreed, but asked that the product of their labors be considered a "Basic Law" rather than a constitution to keep open the option of German reunification under a single constitution. (The Basic Law establishing the FRG was adopted on September 20, 1949.) The Parliamentary Council they formed to draft the document noted in the preamble that it had acted not only for those Germans living in the western part of divided Germany but also "on behalf of those Germans to whom participation was denied." The Parliamentary Council concluded by asserting that "The entire German people are called upon to achieve in free self-determination the unity and freedom of Germany." This resounding affirmation of the goal of reunification has shaped at least the formal position of governments in the FRG ever since.

Meanwhile, in eastern Germany, a series of People's Congresses in 1948 and 1949 led to the adoption of a constitution on May 30, 1949. The priority in the east was to establish a regime responsive to the interests of the U.S.S.R. The German Democratic Republic (GDR) was proclaimed on October 11, 1949.

Evolution of the German Question

When elections were held in the Federal Republic in 1949, the Christian Democratic party led by Konrad Adenauer and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union, won sufficient seats in the *Bundestag* (lower house of the federal parliament) to form a coalition government with the Free Democrats, a traditional "liberal" party, and two smaller parties. Adenauer's policies for 15 years religiously followed the letter of the Basic Law on eventual reunification. The government in Bonn (the West German capital) insisted that only it could represent all of Germany; West Germany would not maintain diplomatic relations with any government which recognized the GDR, except the Soviet Union, and Bonn refused to have any official diplomatic dealings with East Germany.

In practice, Adenauer gave priority to integrating the Federal

Republic into the Western alliance system. The FRG was a founding member of the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Atomic Energy Community, and the Common Market. West Germany joined NATO and the Western European Union (WEU) in 1955 after the Western occupying powers granted it sovereignty, qualified by limitations on the Federal Republic's military forces, the continuing occupation regime in Berlin, and the ultimate authority of the four occupying powers to sign a peace treaty with a united German state. The Western allies set up the WEU in 1954 to give France and other European countries a framework within which to monitor West Germany's rearmament and as a European forum for discussion of defense issues. The much more ambitious plan to integrate the new German forces into a European Defense Community was to have served these purposes and more, but the treaty was defeated in the French National Assembly in August 1954.

The East German constitution of 1949 advocated, as did its West German counterpart, the reunification of Germany. The East German concept of how a reunified Germany would be governed, however, differed substantially from Western objectives. The East German Communist party (Socialist Unity party—SED) claimed that "The German bourgeoisie. . . led the German nation into two disastrous world wars, thereby forfeiting its right to national leadership. . . ." Accordingly, the SED argued that the German working class—of which it claimed to be the sole legitimate representative—should "take up the national mission."

After an uprising in East Germany in June 1953 which required Soviet intervention to control, the Soviet Union abandoned the purported goal of reunification. The East German regime clung to the concept for 15 years, claiming that Germany could be reunified under a "progressive" socialist regime. This line presumably was intended largely as a propaganda ploy rather than as a serious policy, and the East Germans dropped it in 1966. Meanwhile, the GDR joined the Warsaw Pact and Comecon to parallel the FRG's membership in NATO and the EC.

The West German SPD in the 1950s criticized the Adenauer government's strong Western orientation and even objected to the FRG's membership in NATO. The Social Democrats believed that West Germany's NATO membership foreclosed the possibility of reunification. After the party's conference at Bad Godesberg in 1959 (where it dropped its Marxist class struggle concepts), however, the Social Democrats finally accepted the Federal Republic's place in the Western community of nations. Under the leadership of Willy Brandt, the SPD developed a more nuanced approach to Germany's position between East and West which was more consistent with the largely pro-Western sentiments of the West German electorate.

The wall the East Germans constructed in 1961 physically separating East and West Berlin was a stark reminder of the Soviet intention to keep Germany divided, as well as necessary for the GDR to stop its brain drain to the West. But it may also have helped focus West German opinion on the question of how, short of reunification, to overcome barriers to contacts between people in the two parts of Germany.

Chancellor Adenauer resigned in 1963, and his replacement, Ludwig Erhard, was unable to arrest the CDU's popular decline, which yielded significant gains for the Social Democrats in the 1965 parliamentary elections. In 1966, the Free Democrats left the coalition with the Christian Democrats, who in turn formed a "grand coalition" with the ascendant SPD, with the CDU's Kurt-Georg Kiesinger as chancellor and Willy Brandt as vice chancellor and foreign minister.

The grand coalition government adopted a more flexible policy toward East Germany, opened diplomatic ties with Rumania, established a trade mission in Czechoslovakia in 1967 and reestablished diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia in 1968. Attempts to expand the opening to the East were limited, however, by the Soviet Union's insistence that West Germany accept the postwar territorial status quo—a concession that the Christian Democrats were not yet prepared to make.

The West German domestic climate and international politics, however, favored the SPD's more flexible approach. Bonn's most

important allies—the United States and France—for their own reasons were expanding ties to the East. The American and French openings to the East were consistent with the 1967 Harmel Report, which encouraged NATO-wide efforts to promote political cooperation with the Warsaw Pact countries.

Bonn's *Ostpolitik*, or Eastern policy, became a prominent issue in the 1969 parliamentary elections, and the polling produced enough Social Democratic seats to permit Brandt to form a center-left coalition with the Free Democrats. The new government, willing to renounce forceful change of postwar borders, negotiated renunciation-of-force treaties with the Soviet Union and Poland in 1970. The United States, France, Britain and the Soviet Union reached agreement assuring the status of and access to West Berlin in 1971. This quadripartite accord did not change the legal status of Berlin, but it did provide greater assurance that the Soviet Union would not in the future use access to West Berlin as a lever in its relations with the Federal Republic, even if the status of Berlin remained an implicit source of Soviet influence with Bonn.

In 1970, Chancellor Brandt had adjusted the FRG's approach to the German question by referring to the existence of "two German states in one German nation," and East German leader Walter Ulbricht had responded that division is "the historic reality. . . ." Consequently, after winning parliamentary approval for the renunciation-of-force treaties, the Brandt government moved on to negotiate with the GDR the Treaty on the Basis of Relations Between the Two German States, concluded in 1972. In addition, preparations got under way in 1972 for a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which finally convened in Helsinki in 1975. West Germany subsequently established diplomatic relations with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Hungary, and both Germanys were admitted to the United Nations. Bonn and East Berlin, the capital of the GDR, exchanged permanent representatives in March 1974.

In all of these negotiations, the Soviet Union sought to confirm the postwar status quo. The West Germans, on the other hand, without actually accepting as permanent the division of Germany,

and of Europe, were willing to make sufficient concessions to allow Moscow to claim that postwar borders had been confirmed. The way was at least technically left open for the peaceful change of borders if agreed to by the nations involved. In return, Bonn sought and received concessions from Moscow and East Germany that would facilitate increased commerce and human contacts between the two Germanys.

This combination of East-West concessions and compromises was embodied in the 1975 Final Act of the CSCE, known as the Helsinki accord. The Soviet Union interpreted the Final Act as formal acceptance of the postwar borders in Europe. The West Germans saw the document as political validation of the Social Democratic Ostpolitik and, along with their Western allies, as a mandate for further expansion of social, cultural, personal and economic ties to the East. And, in a provision of the accord known as Basket Three, the East agreed to facilitate the "reunification of families" by expediting the granting of visas, charging only moderate sums for them, and not restricting the rights of those wishing to emigrate.

The Persistence of West Germany's Eastern Policies

After more than 15 years of governmental responsibility in Bonn, the Social Democrats by the early 1980s had become a tired and dispirited party. The party's apparent fatigue coincided with the disintegration of détente in East-West relations. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt had taken over the government from Brandt in 1974. Schmidt played a central role in NATO's 1979 decision to deploy new U.S. ground-launched cruise and Pershing II ballistic nuclear missiles on West German territory to strengthen the U.S. promise of extended nuclear deterrence for Western Europe. But the domestic controversy over the missile deployment decision aggravated growing differences within the SPD over the balance between détente and armament policies and raised questions about the strongly pro-U.S. and pro-defense policies of Chancellor Schmidt. In the fall of 1982, the Free Democratic party switched alliances, bringing down the center-left coalition and leading to formation of a new government based on a Christian

Democratic/Free Democratic majority in the Bundestag. Elections early in 1983 produced a comfortable majority for the new coalition.

The center-right coalition, led by the CDU's Helmut Kohl, came to office with unquestioned pro-NATO and pro-American credentials. The fact that Free Democratic leader Genscher remained foreign minister in the new coalition implied substantial continuity in Bonn's foreign policy. That continuity included a commitment to Bonn's Ostpolitik and its *Deutschlandpolitik*, aimed at expanding contacts between the two Germanys. Tactically, an active Eastern policy helped undercut domestic critics who opposed the coalition's acceptance of the American intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) on the ground that acceptance was inconsistent with Ostpolitik. In a longer term perspective, the persistence of Ostpolitik in the new government suggested that the policy had developed a life of its own—whether or not the United States and the Soviet Union were talking to each other.

Even at the peak of Soviet propaganda against the American missile deployments, the Kohl government tried to insulate relations with East Germany from the deteriorating superpower relationship. And the East German leadership responded. When Kohl went to Moscow to attend Soviet President Yuri V. Andropov's funeral in February 1984, he met with East German First Secretary Erich Honecker for two hours. In a statement issued after the meeting, they affirmed the importance of East-West dialogue and hailed "coexistence and cooperation" between the two Germanys for their positive effect on the political climate in Europe.

The Kohl-Honecker meeting initiated what some observers subsequently characterized as the "German spring." As a sign of the warming relations, more than 25,000 emigrants came to the FRG from East Germany in the first seven months of 1984, the largest exodus since the Berlin Wall went up, and West German politicians flocked to East Germany's Leipzig Fair in record numbers. In July, the Kohl government announced a new 950-million deutsche mark loan to East Germany and revealed that East Germany had made additional concessions on foreign

exchange requirements and emigration policy. Furthermore, a West German spokesman confirmed that the East German leader would visit West Germany in the fall.

The 1984 Honecker visit to West Germany never materialized. The Soviet Union made known its skepticism about the wisdom of the project, and the East German leadership was divided on the issue. According to East German sources, those in the leadership, including Honecker, who favored the trip were not sufficiently sure that the visit would be a success to carry their case over Moscow's opposition. The East Germans accordingly announced that they had decided to "postpone" the trip.

This period of intensified activity in inter-German relations—well in advance of the renewed U.S.-Soviet dialogue—heightened international sensitivity to the fact that the question of a divided Germany remains central to the future of the European continent and perhaps to East-West relations in general.

Contemporary Perspectives on the German Question

The Soviet Union played a central role in shaping the original postwar German question, and Soviet influence will undoubtedly be central to the future evolution of the issue. A primary Soviet foreign policy goal is to ensure that no power on its European borders will be able to mount an offensive military threat against the Soviet Union. The policy is motivated primarily by still-strong memories of the death and destruction that Hitler's armed forces inflicted on the Soviet Union during World War II. Even those Russians who are not old enough to have suffered personally during the war apparently accept as a matter of faith the necessity to minimize the risks of attack on the Soviet Union's Western borders. A divided Germany helps ensure that no threat can be mounted against the Soviet Union by the nations located along its European borders.

The Soviet Union has carefully protected its sources of leverage and control over the future of Germany. Moscow's primary source of control is through its relationship with the GDR. Although East German policies are no longer so obviously "made-in-Moscow," the East German regime is still very aware

that its survival depends on performance which passes muster in the Kremlin. The massive Soviet military presence in East Germany, including approximately 380,000 Soviet army personnel, serves as a constant reminder that the GDR remains under the Soviet thumb, even though Moscow's exercise of control is substantially more flexible than it was some years ago.

For a few months in 1984, the fact that the two Germanys were intensifying their relationship while U.S.-Soviet relations remained in the deep freeze led to speculation that East German and Soviet policies toward West Germany were diverging. In retrospect, it appears that Soviet and East German approaches did diverge, at least with regard to timing and tactics. While Moscow continued its diatribe against the West for the new intermediate-range missile deployments, East Berlin argued that the missile deployments and the accompanying downturn in U.S.-Soviet relations were all the more reason for the two Germanys to sustain détente in Central Europe.

Recent experience suggests that Moscow is willing, in the long run and with some mixed feelings, to tolerate East Germany's exploration of expanded contacts with West Germany, particularly when those contacts produce economic or diplomatic rewards. On the other hand, Moscow will not tolerate inter-German developments that might threaten in any way the Soviet requirement for a *cordon sanitaire* (a protective buffer of states) on its Western borders or the leading role of the Communist party in East Germany.

The Soviet Union exercises no direct control over West Germany, but Moscow has numerous sources of indirect leverage. Some are the product of the postwar settlement, including a major influence over the future of Berlin. Some potential sources of influence have been developed over the last 40 years, including access to Soviet natural resources and markets for West German products. Of these sources of influence, perhaps the most important is the fact that the Soviet Union holds the ultimate veto over the future of relations between the two Germanys.

Throughout the postwar period, the Soviet Union has incorporated its various sources of influence in a "carrot and stick"

Reuters/Bettmann Newsphotos

Gorbachev (l.) and Honecker at East German Communist party Congress

strategy toward West Germany. Particularly since the advent of détente in the late 1960s, the Soviets have held out the possibility of improvements in inter-German contacts as an ever-present "carrot," while the prospect of reducing existing contacts has served as an implicit threat.

In return for this leverage vis-à-vis Bonn, the Soviet Union has been required to pay a price. There would be little or no force in Moscow's "stick" if there were no value in the "carrots" offered the West Germans. As a consequence, Moscow has tolerated a variety of contacts between the two Germanys desired by Bonn that could potentially stimulate troublesome attitudes and appetites in the GDR.

The question which from time to time worries some Western officials is whether Moscow would ever be willing to make the West Germans an offer, namely reunification, that they could not refuse. The point may be moot. There is no reason to believe that the Soviet Union will in the foreseeable future see its security, ideological or political interests served by a reunified Germany under any but the most fanciful of circumstances.

From a Soviet perspective, the German question would appear to be how to solidify the division of Germany into two states. Moscow has so far largely had its way ensuring this division. But the Soviet Union apparently is not yet confident that its future security has been guaranteed against a renewed German threat. The slightest suggestion of German nationalist sentiment across the inter-German border immediately produces nervous reactions in Moscow.

East Germany's Perspective

Until the mid-1960s, the East German regime sought to establish its legitimacy by claiming the right to lead the German nation; since then, however, the regime's principal objective has been to defend the legitimacy of the East German state as well as the regime.

The torch of East German leadership has been carried since 1971 by Erich Honecker who, from the outset, argued that the social and economic differences between the FRG and the GDR were so substantial that never the twain shall meet. In recent years, Honecker has somewhat colorfully suggested that unifying East and West Germany, merging capitalism and socialism, would be "as impossible as bringing together fire and water."

After attempting to follow a policy of national demarcation, claiming that East German citizenship was separate and distinct from any broader German nationalism, the GDR has in recent years taken a new tack. To solidify the GDR's claim to legitimacy, the regime has been rewriting German history, associating the current regime with German cultural heroes, including, for example, Martin Luther and Frederick the Great.

Even though East Germany must ultimately align its policies with those of the Soviet Union, the policy preferences of the East German regime respond to East Germany's own distinct interests and requirements, some of which are not necessarily congruent with Soviet interests. Events that followed the beginning of INF deployment demonstrated, for example, that East Germany's relationship with West Germany may under some circumstances be more important to the East German leadership than replicat-

ing Moscow's foreign policy. The fact that there are distinct East German economic and political interests in the relationship with Bonn explain in part why inter-German ties have survived the switch from a center-left to a center-right government in West Germany while simultaneously weathering a severe chill in U.S.-Soviet relations.

For East Germany, the economic tie to the West through inter-German trade and West German loans to the East constitute a major interest in strengthening relations between the two countries. Inter-German trade reached a volume of 16 billion deutsche marks (nearly $7 billion) in 1985. Substantial loans from West German sources in recent years have provided East Germany an important source of hard currency to underwrite purchases of needed goods, including high technology, in the West. The Soviet Union, for its part, fully recognizes the importance to the GDR of these trade and financial ties. In addition, Moscow benefits at least indirectly from East Germany's access to Western technology and from its ally's economic success—a factor which accounts in no small part for Moscow's willingness to tolerate the contacts between the two German states which accompany, or are Bonn's price for, such trade.

The German question for the East German regime today is how it can finally win full acceptance as a legitimate and unique participant in the international system. Such unqualified acceptance would serve the Soviet interest in perpetuating the division of Germany, but, interestingly enough, it would also mean that the legitimacy of the East German regime would rest on substantially more than the support of the Soviet Union. As a consequence, the East Germans may hope that such acceptance would, as a side benefit, give them greater leeway in their relations with Moscow. Perhaps most important from the East German point of view, it would help legitimize the regime before the East German people.

But just as the key to the German question for Bonn is held by Moscow, the key to East Berlin's German question is held by Bonn. As long as the West German government is unwilling to accept without reservation the division of Germany by granting

unqualified recognition to the East German government, East Germany will not gain the legitimacy it seeks.

West German Policy

The German question remains "open" today primarily because West German policy keeps it open. In one important respect, Bonn has little practical choice. The Federal Republic is committed to maintaining firm links to West Berlin. For West Germany, as well as for the West in general, West Berlin has become an important symbol of freedom from Communist rule. The Soviet Union will not allow West Berlin to become legally part of the Federal Republic, and neither West Germany nor its allies will allow West Berlin to become part of the GDR. To make its point, West Germany issues passports to West Berliners and represents their interests when they are abroad; West Berlin deputies sit in the Bundestag in Bonn, even though they are not allowed to vote.

The form as well as the content of West German policy toward East Germany reflects Bonn's decision to withhold full recognition of the GDR's claim to completely separate and sovereign status. East Germans are eligible for West German citizenship; the chancellor's office and the Ministry for Intra-German Affairs, not the Foreign Ministry, are responsible for relations with the GDR; and trade with East Germany is not foreign trade but "intra-German" trade, which allows East German products duty-free entry into the Federal Republic. But the question of reunification has in effect been moved to the distant future, while policymakers concentrate on making the consequences of the division of Germany more tolerable.

This policy accepts to a degree the status quo. But West Germany remains determined to overcome the division through a peaceful and evolutionary process of breaking down barriers that now separate the two Germanys. Only small minorities on the extreme left and right of the West German political spectrum, however, are strong advocates of state reunification as a short-term objective. Those on the left argue for a reunified neutral Germany between East and West. They have been especially

prominent in recent years because of their role in the debate over the deployment of intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe. The establishment of the radical Green party, a loose coalition of traditional leftists, peace activists and environmental groups, has enabled some leftist proponents of reunification to participate directly in West German politics through membership in the national parliament and in regional assemblies and governments.

On the right, an equally small number of dedicated German nationalists shares the leftists' belief that West Germany's integration into the West blocks their priority goal of reunification. Early in 1985, Chancellor Kohl was forced to make explicit his government's commitment to accept current European borders. A Silesian expatriate group of Christian Democratic supporters had embarrassed Kohl with their slogan reasserting a claim to their former homeland, now part of Poland. Such groups, however, have little direct influence on CDU policies, while supporters of reunification within the Social Democratic party are in some respects more prominent.

Public opinion in West Germany reflects mixed emotions about the reunification issue. Some analysts have argued that West Germans are developing a national identity of their own that is progressively replacing "all-German" sentiments. Other observers disagree, pointing to the historical resilience of German nationalism and its contemporary persistence in both East and West Germany.

The extent to which West Germany has developed a national identity is a success for the Western policy of integrating the Federal Republic into the Western political, economic and military system. The ties are numerous, including most importantly West German membership in NATO, with a strong bilateral security tie to the United States at its core, and the Federal Republic's membership in the Community, whose central political dynamic is the bilateral relationship with France. These Western linkages are a source of strength in Bonn's dealings with the East; but they also constrain West Germany's Ostpolitik and Deutschlandpolitik. West Germany's room for maneuver

remains severely limited by its history, geography and political circumstances, which explains in part why no government in Bonn has much flexibility for dramatic changes in the Federal Republic's international orientation or foreign policy goals.

Thus, from the West German perspective, there still is a nagging German question. State reunification is neither a priority for government policy nor a strong motivation for political activism. But opinion polls reveal continuing public support for the ideal of a reunified nonaligned Germany sometime in the future. This suggests that the goal of removing barriers which separate the German people still strikes a sufficiently resonant chord with most West Germans to keep the question alive, even if it is not compelling enough to tempt them to risk the political freedoms and economic opportunities guaranteed by their firm moorings in the Western alliance.

Other European Countries

If German reunification were to become a real possibility, virtually all European nations that suffered from Nazi aggression would, to one degree or another, oppose it. They would not want to see a new German power center in Central Europe. The East European nations make their opposition explicit. The Poles are the most vociferous opponents, displaying not only suspicion regarding West German objectives but also betraying lingering mistrust of Germans in general. Poland and the other East European countries, in supporting the East German regime's claim to legitimacy and opposing reunification, not only follow the Soviet line but also reflect their own national concerns.

In the West, the situation is more complex. West Germany's NATO allies formally support Bonn's policy on the German question. The allies have found such support easier to give since the FRG's Deutschlandpolitik pushed the reunification goal off to some distant future and sought primarily to break down barriers separating the German people. And, because the Soviet Union's opposition to reunification removes it from the realm of the possible, no West European country has to face the issue directly.

Nevertheless, opposition to German reunification lies just beneath the surface. All the smaller European countries are more comfortable with a divided Germany whose western portion is firmly anchored in the West. The FRG's successful integration into the postwar Western community owes much to the fact that its present size relative to its neighbors is not seen as threatening. To the extent that they address the issue in their policies, they seek to ensure that West Germany continues to see its interests served by membership in NATO and the Community.

France is a special case. French governments since World War II have placed a high premium on reducing the chances that France would ever again face a German threat to its security. In recent years, the French have been concerned that the temptation of closer ties with East Germany was pulling the West Germans away from their Western moorings. From the French perspective, a neutral Germany, a pro-Soviet Germany, or a strong, nationalistic reunited Germany all would threaten French security. Novelist François Mauriac captured an important French attitude toward the German question when he wrote, "I love Germany so much that I am happy there are two of them."

Most French politicians would likely agree with President François Mitterrand's 1979 assessment of the German question when, as opposition leader, he said that reunification was "neither desirable nor possible in terms of the European balance of power, France's security and the preservation of peace." Mitterrand and other French politicians, however, are sensitive to Bonn's political requirements, and are sympathetic in particular to the goal of removing barriers to contacts between the German people. French policy therefore reflects compromises between traditional French aversion to German reunification and the requirement for maintaining close and cordial ties to the West German government.

From the French perspective, insurance against a resurgence of the German problem has been provided by West Germany's ties to the United States through the NATO alliance, France's multilateral (Community, Western European Union) ties to Germany and the increasingly close bilateral relationship

between Paris and Bonn. In addition, both France and Britain retain influence on the German question through their continuing quadripartite responsibilities in Berlin and Germany as a whole, along with the United States and the Soviet Union.

In 1984, the West German government was bluntly reminded of the limits of West European support for the FRG's Deutschlandpolitik when Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti said that "Everyone agrees that the two Germanys should have good relations. . . [but] pan-Germanism is something which must be put in the past. There are two German states and two German states must remain." Subsequently, East German leader Honecker was received in Rome with full honors, reinforcing East Berlin's claim to separate and legitimate international standing.

In Eastern Europe, therefore, the German question is how the division of Germany can be made permanent while gradually and selectively expanding contacts with the West European countries. In Western Europe, the question is how the division of Europe can be overcome, taking into account West Germany's position on the national issue without risking recreation of a disruptive German power center in the heart of a reunited Europe. The West European goal is far more difficult to achieve politically than the East European objective. The policies of West European countries must be designed to take into account their antipathy to German reunification while nonetheless supporting their West German ally.

The U.S. Perspective

For more than three decades, the United States has offered verbal support for the eventual goal of peacefully reuniting Germany under conditions freely determined by the German people. U.S.-West German joint statements in recent years have ritually reaffirmed "American support for the political aim of the Federal Republic of Germany to work for a state of peace in Europe in which the German nation will regain its unity through self-determination." This approach combines an implicit rejection of the division of Europe with a commitment to work peacefully toward a political transformation of the status quo

between the two Germanys and between East and West Europe more generally.

Some analysts have recommended that the United States gradually disengage militarily from Europe to help overcome the Continent's division. Such observers argue that the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Western Europe and the assumption by the West European countries of greater responsibility for their own defense would ease the concerns of the Soviet Union about the security of its European borders, encouraging Moscow to loosen its grip on Eastern Europe. But the United States has immense economic, political and military stakes in Europe. Current perceptions of the importance of those stakes would have to change substantially for the United States unilaterally to reduce its involvement, and consequently its influence, in European affairs. In addition, many doubt the proposition that the Soviet Union would respond to a U.S. disengagement by reducing its military presence in Central Europe and giving the East European countries greater freedom. It therefore seems likely that for the foreseeable future the United States will judge that it should retain its sources of direct influence over the future of European security arrangements. This suggests that U.S. policymakers will also continue to find the current approach to German reunification the best of what admittedly may be considerably less-than-perfect options.

There is not the same aversion to reunification in the United States that there is in Europe. Many Americans would like to see Soviet power rolled back from Central Europe, but there is no strong constituency favoring German reunification as such. U.S. policy therefore responds primarily to the importance American administrations attach to the alliance with West Germany. Soviet determination to keep East Germany firmly in the Socialist camp permits the U.S. government, like its European allies, to avoid facing directly the question of whether or not German reunification would be in the U.S. interest. Linking U.S. support for reunification to "a state of peace in Europe" effectively leaves the question in the distant future.

From virtually all perspectives, therefore, the division of

Germany is not an issue that is likely to be resolved in the near future. The fact of Germany's division will continue to play a major role in the shaping of U.S., Soviet and European policies. The focus will be on steps that might ameliorate the consequences of the division of Europe as well as the division of Germany in a pattern of carefully monitored evolutionary change.

3

Overcoming the Division

How can the division of Europe be overcome? Since World War II a variety of answers to this question have contended for prominence. Some have been more attractive from a Western perspective, some from an Eastern. Some have had Eurocentric roots, others grew more directly out of superpower interests.

'Victory' Options

Two classic and opposing approaches to the resolution of Europe's division were spawned by intense East-West confrontation in the late 1940s and early 1950s. In their simplest form, these options represented victory for one side or the other. In one case, the East European countries would somehow defect to the West. In the counterposed case, the West European countries would shift their allegiance to the East. Both of these options sound quite theoretical today because they seem so unlikely. They may never have been realistic premises for either U.S. or Soviet policies.

Did either the United States or the Soviet Union ever really believe that it could undo the division on terms favorable to itself? During the cold war the United States for a time implied that it sought to "roll back" communism in Europe. This suggests that

the Western "victory" option had at least a degree of influence on U.S. policymakers. During the same period, the Soviet Union was actively supporting Communist parties in Western Europe through the Cominform, and through other overt and covert methods designed to increase the chances of bringing additional countries into the Communist fold. The victory option apparently influenced Moscow's policy, too, at least for this period.

In the West, there is very little expectation today that the East European countries will be able to break out of the East bloc in the foreseeable future; there is likewise very little concern that, in today's circumstances, any West European government could be taken over by a pro-Moscow Communist party and converted to Warsaw Pact membership. Although it is more difficult to judge Soviet expectations, the Soviet leadership likely still fears that one or more of its East-bloc allies might gladly leave the pact were it not for the threat of Soviet intervention to forestall such a development. But the Soviet Union today appears more confident than it was in the 1950s of the ability of East European regimes to maintain control without direct help from Soviet troops. It is doubtful that Moscow believes that it could win any converts among West European NATO or even neutral governments. Soviet policy probably aims at the more modest objective of encouraging West European governments to adopt policies that favor Soviet political, military and economic interests.

Europe Between the Superpowers

While the victory options for overcoming the division of Europe grew out of the superpower conflict, other approaches had distinctly European origins. These approaches have one important element in common: a desire to overcome Europe's division by escaping from the hegemony of the two superpowers, or at least to move in that direction.

One variant on this Eurocentric theme envisions a neutral Europe of Eastern and Western nation-states from the Atlantic to the borders of the Soviet Union. At least part of this neutral Europe would be denuclearized, foreign forces would be withdrawn and national military forces strictly limited. "Dissolving

the two military blocs" is the accepted goal of most West European Communist parties, and the East European regimes support it as well. Rumanian President Nicolae Ceausescu has been a leading advocate of the neutralization and demilitarization of Europe as a way of surmounting its division.

This approach has also found some support on the left in Western Europe. For example, the British Labour party's defense platform asserts that the party's long-term goal is to work toward the "mutual dissolution of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact." The idea is that if both the United States and the Soviet Union disengage from their military competition in Central Europe, the European nations will be able to resume more-normal relationships. To believe that this approach has any potential, one has to believe as well that Soviet motivations are primarily defensive, not expansionist, and that the paranoia of the U.S.S.R. about its own security will be sufficiently moderated to allow the East European regimes the political independence that such a formula would require.

A second variant on this theme envisions a "Third Force" Europe, with the current process of integration in Western Europe as a possible way out of Europe's division. This Third Force Europe would have to develop ways and means to defend itself without direct American assistance; it would require substantially more political and military integration among the West European countries than exists today; and, according to proponents of this approach, it would be in a better position to encourage the Soviet Union to loosen its grip on Eastern Europe.

Even though this approach has primarily West European roots, its underlying philosophy has been reflected in proposals made in the last few years by prominent former American officials. Both Henry A. Kissinger, secretary of state 1973–74, and Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security adviser to President Jimmy Carter, have suggested that the United States push the European allies toward greater self-reliance in the security sphere as a means of revolutionizing the nature of the armed confrontation in Europe and possibly leading to a greater degree of freedom for East European nations.

Brzezinski's plan, published in the Winter 1984/85 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, advocated that the United States repudiate Yalta, denying the legitimacy of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe, while confirming the Helsinki accord to reassure the East Europeans that there is no intent to revise European borders. According to the plan, the West European countries would take over principal responsibility for actively involving the East European countries in as many all-European contacts as possible and for encouraging political independence in Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, the United States would begin to disengage militarily from Western Europe while sustaining the promise of extended deterrence (the nuclear umbrella) for as long as necessary. The West Europeans would take on the main burdens of conventional defense in Europe which, according to Brzezinski, would be seen as less threatening by the Soviet Union.

Brzezinski's hope is that such an approach would gradually defuse the U.S.-Soviet confrontation in Central Europe, encourage Soviet troop withdrawals from Eastern Europe, and eventually lead to the reunification of Europe. Some other analysts have developed similar themes.

The majority of Western analysts, however, apparently find this scheme lacking in a number of respects. They argue that such an approach would be risky, given the extent to which its success depends on the good will of the Soviet Union. And many of them doubt that the West European countries would be able to assume the responsibilities expected of them in such an approach, at least in the foreseeable future.

Modified European Security System

The options discussed above have one important thing in common: they all seek revolutionary changes in the European status quo, and therefore would require radical shifts in the current policy approaches of both superpowers and the East and West European countries. By contrast, most West European governments today advocate a more evolutionary process of change. Current Western policies are aimed at the more modest objective of modifying the European security system in ways that

will mitigate Europe's division and make the military aspects of the division less threatening.

West German Foreign Minister Genscher has been one of the most active proponents of this approach, calling it a "realistic" way to deal with the division of Europe. This policy accepts the need for, or inevitability of, continued U.S. and Soviet involvement in European security arrangements. It calls for each side to respect the alliance of the other. At the same time, it strongly supports attempts at mutual reductions of conventional and nuclear armaments in ways that will ease political tensions and make war less likely. Finally, it calls for persistent efforts to break down barriers to trade, human contacts and the free flow of information between East and West.

This approach is based on Western desires to change the East-West status quo in Europe, but it also takes into account some of the limitations on the possibilities for change. It tries, for example, to relieve Moscow's concerns about the security of the Soviet Union by advocating continuation of the two alliance systems. It incorporates the possibility of tradeoffs which offer benefits for both sides. The West Germans have used the trade and economic interests of the Eastern countries as a source of leverage to obtain other concessions. Bonn has, for example, extended financial credits to East Germany in return for an East German agreement to facilitate East-West German human contacts and to remove mines and automatic fence guns along the inter-German border.

Although this approach generally describes U.S. as well as West European policies, the allies are frequently in disaccord over the details of its implementation. Some of the differences reflect the fact that the Western victory option still attracts some popular support in the United States while it commands virtually no such support in Western Europe. It also reflects different attitudes toward the relative efficacy of available policy tools. The West Europeans, particularly the Germans, believe that trade and financial opportunities can be effective carrots to influence East European and Soviet behavior. At the same time, they are skeptical about the value of economic sticks, such as trade

sanctions, in the East-West relationship. The United States, on the other hand, is more cautious about the gains that can be realized in return for such carrots and is still tempted by the potential value of sanctions to influence East European or Soviet behavior with respect to issues outside Europe.

These issues raise difficult dilemmas for the Eastern alliance as well as for NATO. The East European states are strongly interested in expanding their relations with the West, and are frequently willing to be more flexible on certain issues, human contacts, for example, than the Soviet Union finds acceptable in its own relations with the West. Most East European regimes probably see contacts with the West as creating some additional room for them to maneuver in their relationship with Moscow while providing them with needed markets, technology and investment capital. Moscow remains suspicious of Western goals toward Eastern Europe, but recognizes that important economic benefits can flow to itself as well as to Eastern Europe from an expansion of ties. The Soviets, of course, have their own agenda. Moscow attempts to undermine public and governmental support in Western Europe for increased defense efforts urged by the United States and to influence West European support for East-West policies that favor Soviet interests.

In any case, these general guidelines for the conduct of East-West relations, established largely during the period of détente in the 1970s, remain the rules for the game in the mid-1980s. They have been formalized in the terms of the Helsinki Final Act. They have resisted the tensions of the new cold-war period of the early 1980s. And they will likely provide the framework for East-West relations in Europe for many years to come.

Channels Toward Change

Relations between the two alliances in Europe remain more conflictual than cooperative. The long-term goals of the two sides are influenced by substantially different visions of the future. Nevertheless, both sides have accepted a framework for the negotiation and management of evolutionary adjustments in

European relationships. That framework consists of traditional bilateral East-West European links and an expanding set of multilateral ties.

Bilateral Ties

The centrally important relationship between the two Germanys is framed by a complex set of multilateral arrangements, but the relationship is managed primarily on a bilateral level. This is a particularly active bilateral channel, in part because the two governments are still in the process of defining their relationship. Given the competing demands on the two sides, this is a slow and arduous process. Even such areas as cultural ties and environmental cooperation are politicized in the German context because of the unusual status of relations between the two governments. Trade between the Germanys is also affected by the unusual political relationship. In order to maintain the existence in principle of a united Germany, West Germany throughout the postwar period regarded trade with East Germany as internal German trade, unaffected by tariff or other international trade barriers. For East Germany, this political requirement for the West Germans has guaranteed East German products privileged access to the West German market, and consequently to the Community market as well.

Bilateral contacts also remain of great political importance to other European nations. For West European countries, bilateral contacts with East European nations and the Soviet Union allow a fuller expression of specific national interests that tend to be watered down or modified in a multilateral context. This is particularly important for France, whose foreign policy depends on maintaining an "independent" posture toward important international issues. But this symbol of sovereignty and independent action is valued as well by other European countries.

The European neutrals serve in many ways as a bridge across the East-West divide. Austria, for example, has extremely close economic ties to West Germany while at the same time developing active ties with its East-bloc neighbor, Hungary.

From a practical point of view, many areas of cooperation are

most easily arranged on a bilateral basis. Cultural exchanges, for example, tend to be expressions of national cultures, and fit naturally into a pattern of bilateral relationships.

Even though both the East and West European countries are grouped into their own economic communities, the economic interaction between East and West takes place largely through bilateral channels. The members of the Community have for years tried to convince the Soviet Union that it should recognize the EC as the legitimate representative of the member countries in trade matters. Over time, the Soviet Union has accepted the EC as a reality, and Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev has even suggested that the Soviet Union might be willing to open official relations with the EC, and a dialogue between the EC and Comecon has been resumed. At the same time, however, Gorbachev has apparently attempted to impose greater economic discipline within the ranks of the Comecon members, and his move toward the EC may be intended to produce a reciprocal West European recognition of Comecon as the representative of the Eastern countries in trade matters. If this is Gorbachev's goal, the West Europeans will have mixed reactions. They do not believe that Comecon is in any way the equivalent of the EC, and they share the concern of the East European countries that the result of the initiative could be less—not more—freedom of economic maneuver for the East European states. This complication illustrates the numerous political and technical obstacles that make even modest changes in the status quo a major issue for both sides.

Multilateral Links

Increasingly, relations between Eastern and Western Europe are managed in a variety of multilateral frameworks. The most important of these is the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. A series of complex East-West compromises at Helsinki produced three separate areas of agreement, or "baskets," dealing with various components of international relationships in Europe. Basket One deals with issues related to security, specifying 10 principles governing relations among states and

calling for confidence-building measures to help clarify the military intentions of the two sides. Basket Two calls for expanded cooperation in the fields of economics, science and technology, and the environment. Basket Three deals with one of the more difficult areas of East-West relations and a major source of East-West tensions: cooperation in humanitarian and other related fields. The agreement established specific measures to foster human contacts, including family reunification, binational marriages, individual tourism, freedom of information, and cultural and educational exchanges.

The Helsinki accord established a process, even though the Final Act was a nonbinding agreement. Follow-up meetings have been held in Belgrade and Madrid and a third is scheduled to begin in Vienna, Austria, in November 1986. A variety of other forums has grown out of the process, including a Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (CDE), designed to expand the confidence-building measures of the Helsinki accord into a wider set of procedures and agreements to stabilize military relations in Europe.

The Helsinki framework reflects both the hopes and the realities that characterize East-West relations in Europe today. Throughout the process, the two military alliances have maintained more or less unified fronts in the negotiations. The two sides have presented competing proposals on most issues, and the neutral/nonaligned countries have played the role of arbitrator on many issues, preparing and presenting compromise positions taking into account the ideas and interests of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The general character of the process has therefore reflected to some degree the bloc-to-bloc structure of relations in Europe.

On the other hand, there have been exceptions to bloc cohesion. The Soviet Union, of course, is much better able to impose uniformity on its allies than is the United States. Nevertheless, shades of differences have appeared from time to time, reflecting unique perspectives of individual East European countries. The West European participants have attempted to avoid casting the CSCE in too much of a bloc-to-bloc framework to encourage as

much flexibility for the East European participants as possible.

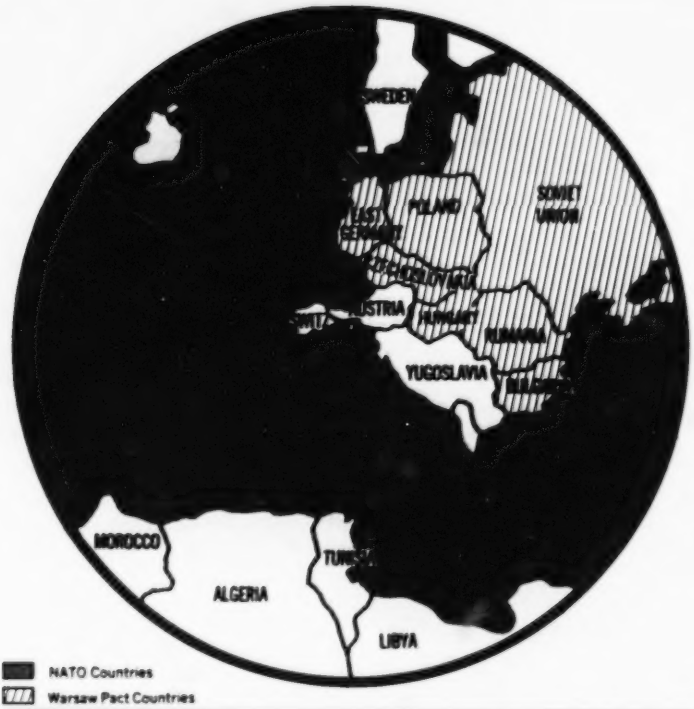
On the Western side, approaches to many CSCE issues have been fully coordinated within NATO, but the members of the Community, through the process of European Political Cooperation (EPC), developed many common positions among themselves parallel with or in advance of the NATO discussions. Now, two more NATO countries—Spain and Portugal—are members of the Community, increasing the potential impact of the EPC discussions on NATO consultations. And, just as the Warsaw Pact has had a Rumanian maverick, NATO ally Greece in recent years has rebelled against many positions shared by other NATO members.

One of the attractions of the CSCE framework for East and West European countries alike is that even though the two alliance systems play a role in the process, the alliances are not formally represented. From a European perspective, this provides greater room for maneuver between the superpowers.

The CSCE initially dealt only tangentially with military security issues. The Helsinki Final Act did include agreement on some minimal confidence-building measures providing for advance notification of major military maneuvers and encouraging participants to invite observers. Now, however, the military security scope of the Helsinki framework has been expanded by the CDE, which opened in Stockholm, Sweden, in January 1984. The mandate called for the participants to negotiate measures which are militarily significant, politically binding, verifiable and applicable to all of the CSCE area, including the European portion of the Soviet Union.

This elaboration on CSCE's security content will likely provide an increasingly important basis for discussion of European security issues in the future.

Two very important sets of European security negotiations take place outside the Helsinki framework; both involve a much more dominant superpower role. Since 1973, NATO and Warsaw Pact delegations have met in Vienna attempting to negotiate reductions in the forces of the two alliances in Central Europe. Because these negotiations on mutual and balanced force reduc-



tions (MBFR), as they are called by the West, were established on a bloc-to-bloc basis, France has not participated in them.

The Vienna force reduction talks were deadlocked for many years over how many troops the Warsaw Pact maintained in the reduction area (the area includes, in the East, Poland, East Germany and Czechoslovakia and, in the West, West Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg). Now, however, the West has suggested that the dispute over numbers be put aside to permit initial reductions of U.S. and Soviet forces. According to the Western plan, after initial small cuts in U.S. and Soviet forces and a freeze on all other forces in the area, both sides would conduct on-site inspections for three years to determine the force

levels of the two sides. The proposal brought the two sides closer to agreement than at any time in the 13 years of negotiations, and the key area of disagreement now focuses on the number and type of inspections that would be allowed.

The MBFR negotiations deal directly with the opposing military forces in Central Europe, and therefore have a much more concrete military content than the security negotiations that have emerged from CSCE. Because the topics under discussion directly involve U.S. and Soviet military forces, the two alliance leaders have a dominant role in the Vienna negotiations. But most of the West and East European countries believe that, in spite of the failure to reach agreement so far, the negotiations remain an important channel of East-West communication and potential agreement on central security issues.

The other set of negotiations concerns intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe and is conducted solely between the United States and the Soviet Union. The deployment of new American intermediate-range missiles in Western Europe has been a major issue in East-West relations since 1979. In spite of Soviet claims that the new U.S. missiles would block further development of East-West relations in Europe, both German governments and those of other European countries have sought to ensure that this would not be the case by stepping up their contacts in the wake of the U.S. missile deployments instead of cutting them back.

A U.S.-Soviet agreement to limit this class of missiles would make a substantial contribution to the political atmosphere in Europe. This issue, however, has much more to do with the relationship between the United States and its West European allies than it does with East-West relations in Europe. The West European allies would be pleased if the United States and the Soviet Union could reach agreement on limiting such systems. On the other hand, they would be deeply concerned if the United States were to remove all its intermediate-range missiles from Europe if they felt that such a step weakened the U.S. nuclear guarantee of Europe's security.

4

Future Issues and Implications

The basic structure of East-West relations, involving two competing political and military blocs as well as two different economic systems, is unlikely to change substantially in the next few years, perhaps not for the rest of this century. Both East and West European countries will presumably continue to regard maintaining their current alliance ties as their primary policy requirement.

Within this framework, however, the priorities of the East and West European countries in relations with their superpower allies are likely to continue to evolve, and this will affect both the conduct and the content of East-West relations in Europe.

The foundation for change in the West resides in the different U.S. and European appreciations of the need for cooperation with the East. When President Gerald R. Ford suggested that the term détente should be removed from the West's political vocabulary, many Europeans winced and hoped the comment would not be prophetic. But Ford's declaration was inspired by some deeper trends in American thinking and did project accurately the future course of U.S. policy.

The Administration of President Carter was unsure in its early years what it would do about the growing disenchantment,

particularly among American conservatives, with the era of détente. The Administration revealed a split personality in its approach to the Soviets. On the one hand, it wanted, and negotiated, a strategic arms control accord with Moscow. On the other hand, the Administration's concern for human rights issues produced a strong critique of the Soviet Union's treatment of its own citizens, criticism which cohabited very uncomfortably with the Administration's attempts to sell a U.S.-Soviet arms control deal to the Congress.

While the treaty that emerged from the second strategic arms limitation talks (SALT II) languished in the U.S. Senate late in 1979, the Soviet Union provided the stimulus for resolution of the dilemma in Carter Administration policy. Moscow's invasion of Afghanistan collapsed what was left of U.S.-Soviet détente.

Washington's unilateral declaration of the death of détente, however, was never fully accepted in Europe. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was seen as distasteful evidence of Soviet insecurity and interventionism, but not as a direct threat to Europe and certainly not as a sufficient rationale for jeopardizing the fruits of détente in Europe. While many prominent Americans openly questioned the validity of the "détente" half of the Harmel formula for NATO's policies toward the East, the West Europeans clung tenaciously to both halves—defense and détente.

Throughout the early 1980s, the United States and the European allies struggled with the great variety of issues raised by their differing perspectives on the importance of cooperation with the East and whether or not détente was "divisible," applicable to Europe but not the Third World. The debate intensified with the advent of the Reagan Administration, which was determined to implement a tough new American policy toward the Soviet Union, backed by a substantial defense buildup. Within months, the Administration's approach clashed with European plans to assist in Moscow's project to construct a new pipeline to deliver Soviet natural gas to West European purchasers, increasing West European reliance on Soviet-produced energy. The United States cajoled and pressured the allies, and when that failed even took legal action hoping to block the project.

The allies have managed to work out compromises on many of the specific issues raised by the differing American and European perspectives. The allies agreed to the U.S. argument for sanctions against Poland when the Polish government, under pressure from Moscow, declared martial law in December 1981 and cut short the process of political liberalization in that country. The West Europeans did so in spite of their skepticism about the utility of such sanctions and their concern to keep communications open with whatever regime ruled in Warsaw. The United States, for its part, ultimately backed away from its strong opposition to West European participation in the trans-Siberian gas pipeline when it became clear that such opposition created more problems for the Western alliance than for the Soviet Union. But even though the United States and Western Europe found ways to compromise these and other differences, European governments have never accepted the American contention that détente is dead or that the alliance should jettison its mandate for improving relations and seeking arms control agreements with the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies.

The NATO allies have glossed over their differences by agreeing on the need for genuine détente as a way of acknowledging the American judgment that much of what was achieved in East-West relations during the 1970s was not genuine. But the West European countries, West Germany in particular, have a stake in improved East-West relations which they will pursue irrespective of U.S. views or the status of U.S.-Soviet relations.

Superpower Consultations

As the United States and the Soviet Union resume their dialogue with the possibility of annual summit meetings, intensified bilateral exchanges and arms control negotiations, the West Europeans will want to take part in the warming trend. They will look for opportunities for expanded bilateral political contacts with East European countries and for growth in trade, even though economic circumstances will limit the rate at which that trade can grow in any case. They will lobby for U.S.-Soviet progress toward limiting strategic nuclear arms, and for prevent-

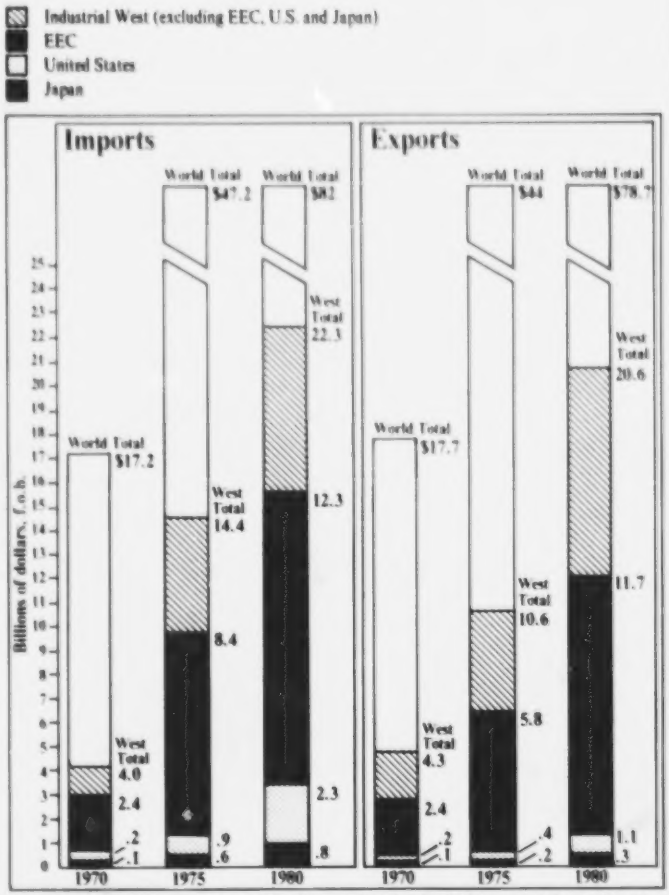
ing an East-West race in space weapons and strategic defenses. They will also want to see progress in arms control directly affecting Europe, seeking movement in the CDE, MBFR and INF areas. They will also continue to push for normalization of relations with Poland, hoping to increase Western influence over the evolution of Poland's policies and to diminish Polish dependence on the Soviet Union.

In all of these areas, the United States will face a variety of choices concerning alliance cohesion and the proper balance between conflict and cooperation in East-West relations. The West European countries will likely want to move faster than the United States in expanding the cooperative side of the ledger. The West Europeans will see more value in purely political accords with the East than will the United States. They will be reluctant to impose trade sanctions against the Soviet Union or any of its East European allies under most circumstances. They will be more permissive than the United States about which technologies can be sold to the East without undermining Western security interests. These tendencies will be even more pronounced should center-left governments replace the current center-right governments in Britain and West Germany.

The choices Washington must make will affect U.S. relations with West Germany most directly. Germany's ability to break down barriers that divide the German nation is to a substantial degree dependent on the tolerance of the Soviet Union. U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union therefore is constrained by West Germany to the extent that the United States depends on West German collaboration to implement specific policy approaches.

West Germany's trade with East Germany and other East European countries is not just of economic importance to the FRG; it is an essential ingredient of Bonn's Deutschlandpolitik and Ostpolitik. As a component of Deutschlandpolitik, Bonn sees trade with the GDR as an important means of preserving the unity of the German nation across the East-West divide. In Ostpolitik, trade is viewed as a way to encourage East European regimes to demonstrate greater independence from Moscow and adopt more-liberal policies toward their citizens. The United

Trends in East European Trade with the West*



*Derived from data presented in "Eastern Europe: Changing Trade Patterns and Perspectives," by James L. Ellis in *East European Economies: Slow Growth in the 1980's, Volume 2, Foreign Trade and International Finance*, published by the Joint Economic Committee, U.S. Congress, March 28, 1986. "Eastern Europe" in this table refers to Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (GDR), Hungary, Poland and Rumania. Data do not include intra-German trade. EEC statistics include Denmark, Iceland and the United Kingdom.

Chart by Bob Mansfield

States must take these interests into account if it wishes to ensure the effectiveness of its trade, technology transfer and sanctions policies toward Warsaw Pact countries.

Furthermore, West Germany cannot accept military plans which either tend to reinforce the division of Germany or imply aggressive intentions toward the East. U.S. defense planning must take these German requirements into account. These factors come directly into play in discussions for improving NATO's nonnuclear defenses. Proposals, for example, to construct physical barriers along the inter-German border to help limit possible avenues of attack for Warsaw Pact forces run into West German objections because of the symbolic impact of such barriers. Similarly, any suggestion that NATO is moving toward an offensive force posture and strategy sets off alarm bells in West Germany because such an approach would conflict with Bonn's strategy for improving East-West relations in Europe.

Most importantly, the U.S. government must be careful that its policies not encourage some future West German government to forsake its NATO ties in order to try to achieve reunification. The hard-line rhetoric of the first Reagan Administration, combined with the deployment of new intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe, may have increased support among the West German leftists for abandoning the Atlantic alliance to obtain German reunification. Should the Social Democrats return to power, their policies will to some degree be influenced by the minority in the party who are alienated from the United States and are primarily interested in improving ties with East Germany.

Even if the United States shapes its policies with great care and consideration for West European interests, the West European allies will likely intensify their efforts to shape common approaches to East-West relations—in spite of their own internal differences about how to deal with the East. They will use European Political Cooperation as a prime forum for this process, even though the addition of Spain and Portugal to the EC will make this forum, as well as other EC bodies, more cumbersome. Other European institutions, such as the Western European Union, not handicapped by a large and diverse membership,

could also play a role. This collaboration will complicate U.S. leadership of the alliance, particularly when U.S. and West European priorities are in conflict. But, given the high priority that the West Europeans will presumably continue to attach to their alliance with the United States, they will seek to ensure that whatever differences they have with their American ally do not disrupt the fundamental transatlantic relationship.

Continuity and Change in the East

If change is inhibited by the requirements of alliance in the West, it is much more severely limited in the Eastern bloc. The Soviet Union still feels that its security requires a form of political and military loyalty from its Warsaw Pact allies that would be intolerable among truly independent states.

This subservience of the East European states to the Soviet Union, however, is under continuing pressure. The imposition of bloc loyalty has limited but not transformed traditional nationalism in Eastern Europe. Conflict is built into the relationship between the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies. That conflict is controlled primarily by the Soviet Union's overwhelming power and its demonstrated willingness to use that power, if necessary, to ensure the loyalty of a bloc ally.

In many ways there is substantial continuity in the Soviet Union's management of its alliance. But there is also change. For a number of years, Moscow has sought ways in which alliance unity could be maintained at a lower political and economic cost to the Soviet Union. From a practical perspective, the Soviets have known that greater self-generated stability in East European regimes would reduce the pressure on the Soviet Union to provide that stability with its forces and economic support. Moscow would prefer that East European regimes be able to cope with their political and economic problems without direct Soviet assistance. When the Solidarity movement in Poland substantially undercut the authority of the Communist party and the Polish government, Moscow chose to have the Polish army reimpose discipline rather than face the even larger costs of direct intervention. Moscow's tolerance of economic experimentation in

Eastern Europe, expanded trade with Western Europe, and participation in "capitalistic" Western financial organizations all suggest that the Soviet Union is willing to permit diversity as long as it does not threaten the Warsaw Pact's cohesion.

In addition, the simple fact is that the economic success of some Warsaw Pact members, Hungary and East Germany in particular, has made the survival of their regimes less dependent on the Soviet Union. These stronger internal roots give the regimes more leverage with Moscow, a trend that West European countries undoubtedly will continue to support with loans and trading opportunities for East European nations.

In the early years of the Gorbachev era, it is difficult to predict how his style of leadership and approach to alliance management will affect the division of Europe. He cannot risk the disintegration of Moscow's alliance. But, for a variety of reasons, even if he wanted to do so, he would not be able to reestablish the rigid bloc discipline of the 1950s. The Soviet Union's relations with its East European allies will probably involve more negotiating and less dictating than has been the case in the past. East European regimes will be encouraged to engage in economic and financial ventures with the West, particularly when those ventures promise to bring needed technological advances to the East. The Soviet Union will probably tolerate even more diversity in East European economic systems as long as the diversity works to strengthen the economy in question and does not undermine the dominant role of the Communist party or the regime's commitment to Warsaw Pact membership.

The Polish situation will continue to be the main challenge to the viability of this approach. Poland's economy has shown few signs of renewed vitality, and part of the economic problem is undoubtedly a result of the limited popularity enjoyed by the current Polish regime. Moscow may give the East German and Hungarian regimes more room for maneuver in their relations with the West, but as long as Poland remains unstable Moscow will keep a close watch on all aspects of Polish economic and political developments. Furthermore, another potential problem looms on the horizon in Rumania, where a deteriorating

economic situation could combine with a political succession crisis when Ceausescu passes from the scene.

To the extent that East European regimes have greater flexibility to deal with the West, the Western attempt to break down barriers that divide Europe may make at least some progress. The Soviet Union, however, is clearly not prepared to contemplate a revolutionary change in the status quo.

The Future

A number of factors are working against the continued East-West division of Europe. They include the desire of East and West Europeans to engage in more normal contacts, the economic pressures on the East to participate more actively in the dynamism of the Western marketplace, the diminished power of both superpowers relative to their allies, and the advent of global communications networks which make it increasingly difficult to isolate one modern society from another—even in a dictatorship of the proletariat.

Overcoming the division, however, probably would require much more fundamental change than can reasonably be expected in the foreseeable future. At a minimum, such change would have to include:

- the emergence of a more secure, pragmatic Soviet Union, willing to tolerate greater diversity and openness in its own society as well as in its relations with other nations; whether Gorbachev will lead in this direction remains to be seen, but in any case the process will be slow and uncertain;
- a solution to the German problem;
- greater willingness of European states to develop regional solutions to political and security problems; and,
- much more-substantial progress toward a more cooperative, less antagonistic relationship between the superpowers.

Some of the seeds for such a future have been planted. Whether or not they will take root and blossom into a new and more acceptable European security system may be at issue for many years to come.

Talking It Over

A Note for Students and Discussion Groups

This issue of the HEADLINE SERIES, like its predecessors, is published for every serious reader, specialized or not, who takes an interest in the subject. Many of our readers will be in classrooms, seminars or community discussion groups. Particularly with them in mind, we present below some discussion questions—suggested as a starting point only—and references for further reading.

Discussion Questions

Since World War II, Europe has been divided into opposing Eastern and Western alliances. What were the principal causes of that division? What are the main political, economic and military consequences of Europe's division?

The German question is central to the division of Europe. What led to the division of Germany into Eastern and Western states?

The Federal Republic of Germany wants to overcome Germany's division. How has it attempted to do so? How has the FRG's approach evolved over the last 30 years?

East Germany opposes talk of reunification but favors expanding contacts with West Germany. What does East Germany hope to achieve in its relationship with the Federal Republic?

The United States consistently supports West Germany's rhetorical advocacy of German reunification. How sincere is this position? To what extent is it designed simply to maintain good relations with our German ally?

Can the European nations overcome division on their own, or do the United States and the Soviet Union retain primary control over this issue?

In what ways are the Western countries attempting to mitigate the division? How do they view the role of East-West trade in this effort? How important is the East-West framework provided by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe?

How have the East European countries and the Soviet Union responded to Western efforts to open up the East to more contact with the West? What are the most important limits on their willingness to cooperate? What factors motivate them to cooperate?

What would have to change in the current framework of East-West relations to overcome Europe's division? What are the prospects that future trends will move in this direction?

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